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18 October 1963

MEMORANDUM FOR : Chief, Programs Staff, Office of Special Activities

SUBJECT : Additional Aircraft Procurement

REFERENCE : Memo for C/PS/OSA from AAD/OSA, Dated 14 October 1963; Subject: "Conversation with Captain Howard Skidmore, USN, Regarding Certain JCS OXCART Clearances [redacted]"

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1. As a follow-on to the reference, I had a conversation with Colonel Leo P. Geary, AFIGO-S, on the morning of 16 October, prompted by the latter's interest in checking with me on aircraft attrition losses in the IDEALIST Program in the early days as it bore upon his present editorial duties to draw up a paper which would be the JCS answer to the Secretary of Defense's communication referred to in the reference.

2. Colonel Geary's call thus made me able to discover that the Joint Chiefs of Staff had agreed among them to let USAF draw up their position in response to the McNamara letter with the understanding that once created, this Air Force paper would be answered by the Chairman of the JCS. Colonel Geary described the Air Force view as being motivated by a desire for an immediate decision by the Secretary of Defense, and further that the JCS would be requesting an additional procurement of 25 so-called R-12 aircraft above the total of 31 now contemplated. Apparently the "immediate decision" needed would be to permit the inclusion in the Program D FY 1965 budget of sufficient monies to insure the availability of long-lead items for the additional 25 planes. If approved by the Secretary of Defense, this would ultimately bring the R-12 procurement to 56 aircraft.

3. When asked whether all of the additional 25 might be carbon copies of the R-12, Colonel Geary admitted that it was his intention to leave this aspect of the matter somewhat vague, since by the time these planes were delivered, presumably in late FY 1966 or early and mid FY 1967, operational

USAF review(s) completed.

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requirements might have changed. He said that it was possible that it might be necessary to have additional AQ-12's (TAGBOARD vehicles), RS-12's (the reconnaissance-strike version), more AF-12's (the long-range interceptor version), or possibly even RB-12's (the least likely prospect, since I understand General LeMay is wholly disenchanted with this version). Colonel Geary said that he was hopeful of being able to utilize at least three of the first six R-12 test aircraft in an operational configuration. There was even a suggestion that if matters went smoothly that certain of the aircraft might end up thusly configured. The net result of a procurement of this size would be give the Air Force the numerical equivalent of a normal SAC wing of R-12's. I have suspected all along that this might be the ultimate goal of USAF in this vehicle, a fact which was more or less confirmed by Dr. McMillan's oblique reference to an ultimate procurement of "some 40 to 65 of these planes" in a meeting on the OXCART Contingency Plan early this week. A buy of this size also begins now to match up with the figure which I understand was suggested by Mr. McNamara's letter to the Joint Chiefs and alluded to in Paragraph 2 of the reference.

JAMES A. CUNNINGHAM, JR.
Acting Assistant Director
(Special Activities)

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